

Power rivalries in the South China Sea

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Outline

1. The South China Sea (SCS) and the SCS disputes:
 - ✓ General introduction
 - ✓ Strategic importance of the SCS.
 - ✓ The SCS disputes
2. China and Vietnam's perspectives on the SCS disputes:
 - ✓ Sovereignty issue
 - ✓ View of itself
 - ✓ Approaches to the disputes
3. Conclusion:

The South China Sea

- Geography



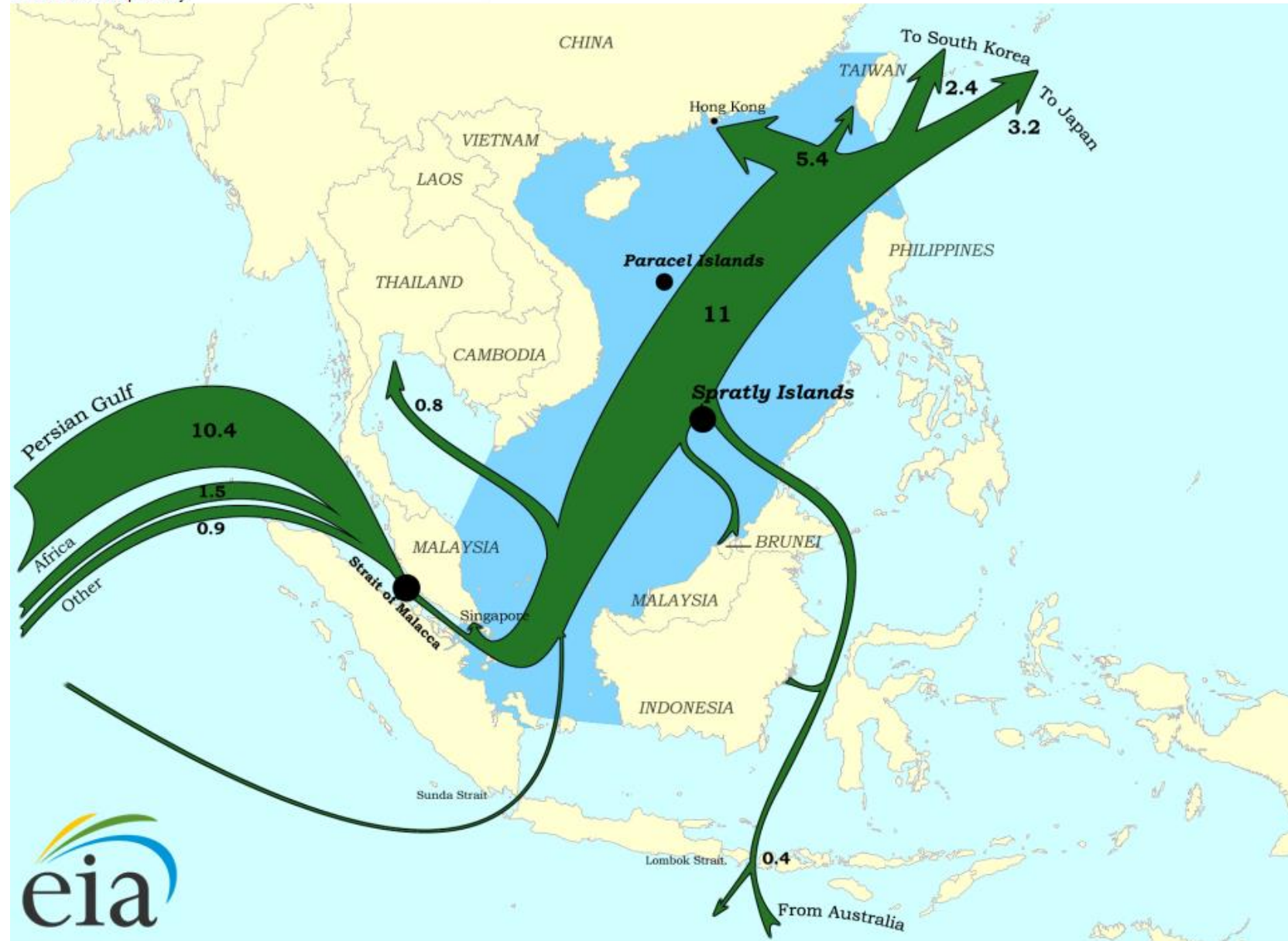


The South China Sea

- Geography
- Strategic importance of the SCS
 - Geo-economics

Major shipping route

Major crude oil trade flows in the South China Sea (2011)
million barrels per day

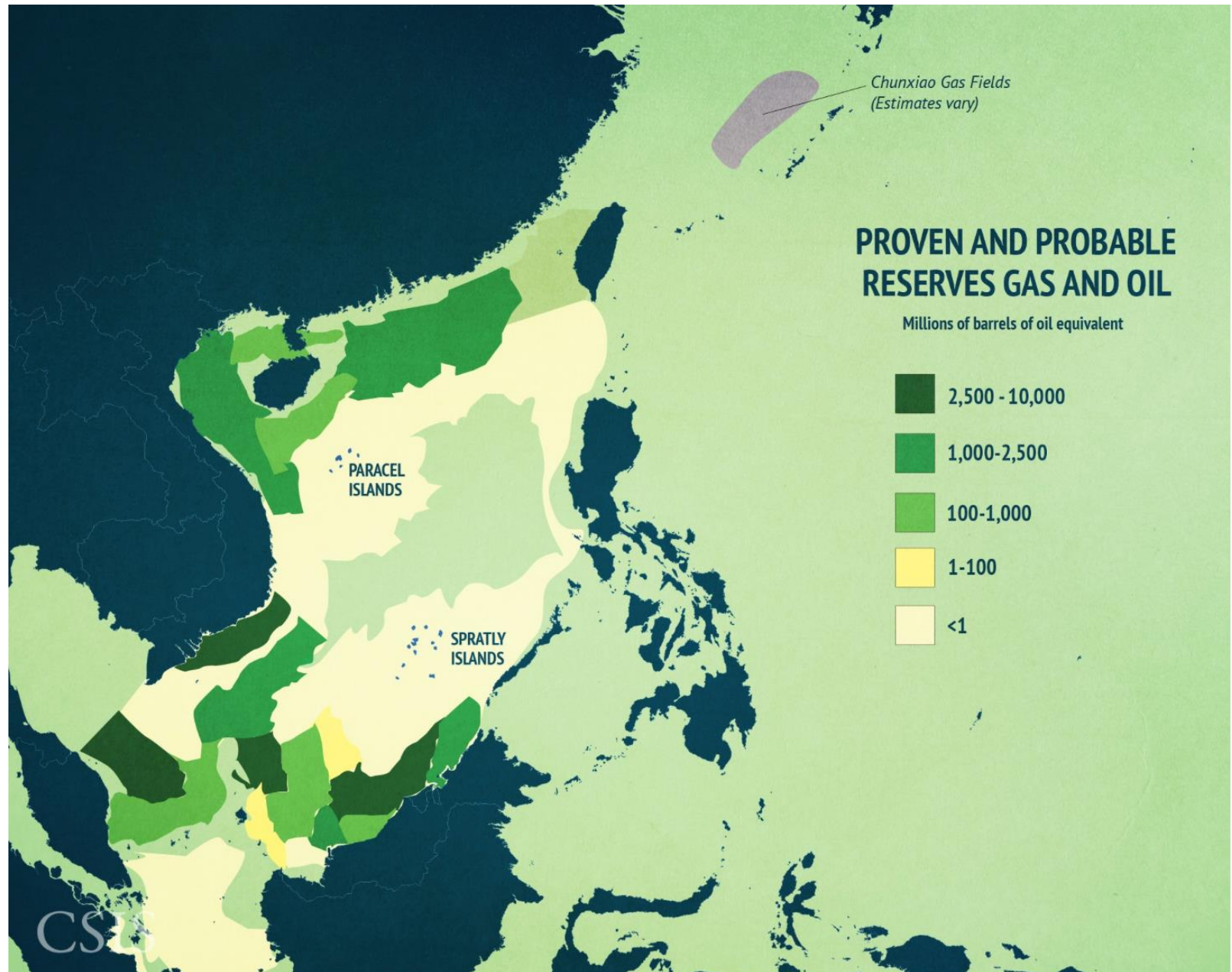


Oil and gas reserves

+ The U.S Energy Information Administration (EIA): 11 billion of oil barrels, 190 trillion of cubic meters of gas.

+ The Chinese National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC): 125 billion of oil barrels and 500 trillion of cubic meters of gas

⇒ “second Persian Gulf.”



The South China Sea

- Geography
- Strategic importance of the SCS
 - Geo-economics
 - Geo-politics

“Girdle of marginal seas” swaddling the Eurasian mainland

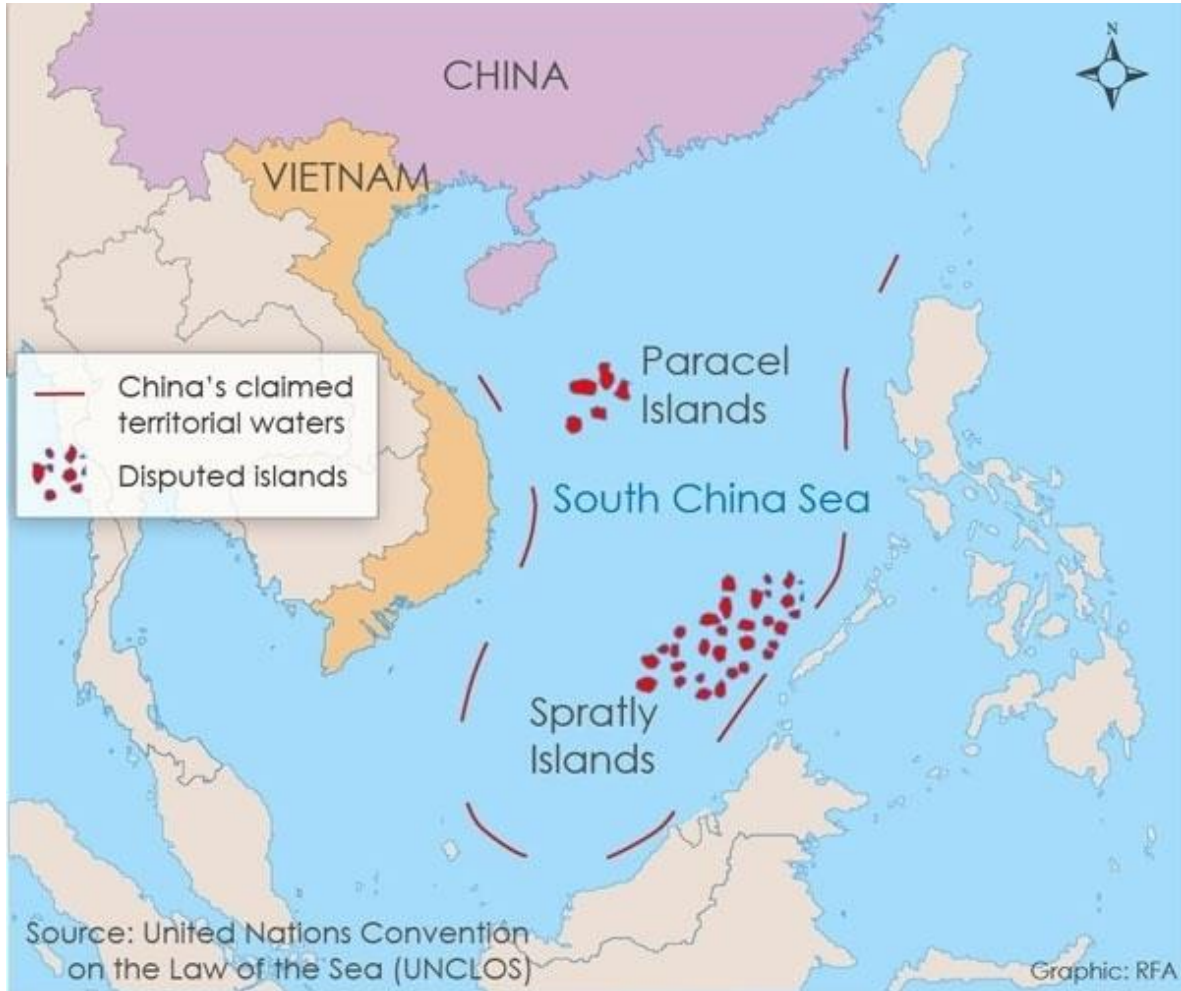


The South China Sea disputes

- Who claim what in the disputes?
- The basis of their claims?



Who occupied what in the disputes?



Who is doing what in the disputes?

VIETNAM

Spratly Island
Southwest Cay
West London Reef
Namyit
in Cowe
Sand Cay
Others

MALAYSIA

Swallow Reef
Mariveles
Ardasier Reef
Erica Reef

TAIWAN

Itu Aba

PHILIPPINES

Thitu Island
Northeast Cay
Flat Island
West York
Nanshan
Loaita Island
Others

1 km

CHINA

Mischief
Fiery Cross Reef
Cuarteron Reef
Johnson Reef
Subi Reef
Hughes Reef
Gaven Reef

CHINA

1,652 buildings

2,155

VIETNAM

238 buildings

PHILIPPINES

100 buildings

In total across both island chains, China has erected more structures than all other occupants combined.

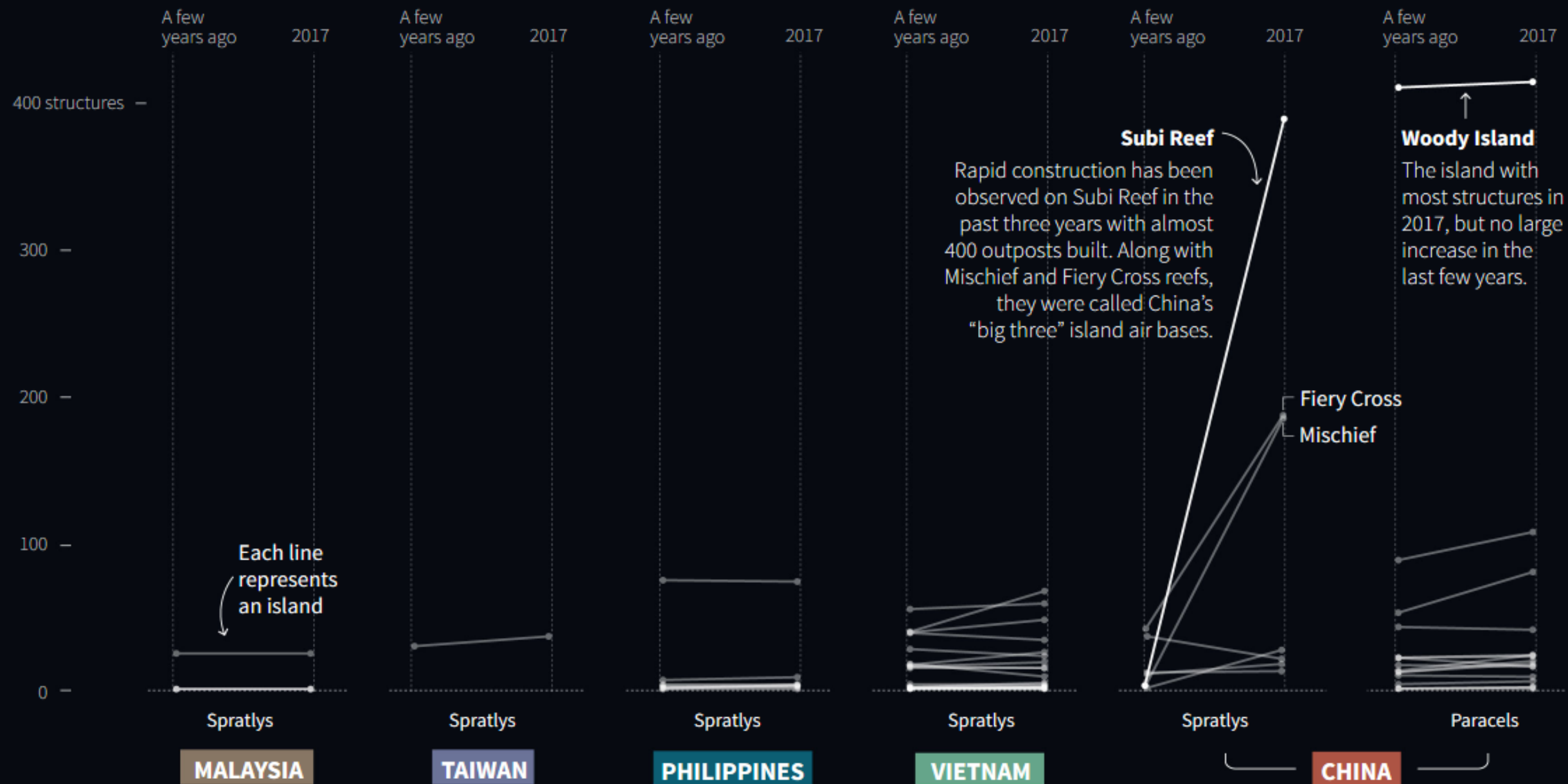
TAIWAN

27 buildings

MALAYSIA

28 buildings

NUMBER OF STRUCTURES



China and Vietnam's perspectives on the South China Sea disputes

Sovereignty in the SCS

- China's perspectives:
 - The SCS is a part of China since ancient time
 - China's 4 firsts
 - First to discover
 - First to name the SCS and islands: " Zhang Hai" , Wanli Shitang, and Wanli Changsha, Nansha and Xisha.
 - First to exercise **administrative jurisdiction** over the islands in the SCS: through administrative establishment, naval patrol, resource development and management
 - First to develop the islands
- Recognized by international community:
 - 1883: Germany surveyed the SCS and faced protested from Chinese Government
 - 1958: the Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong diplomatic notes.

《中華人民共和國政府關於領海的聲明》

(1958年9月4日全國人民代表大會常務委員會第一百次會議批准)

中華人民共和國政府宣布：

(一)中華人民共和國的領海寬度為十二海里(浬)。這項規定適用於中華人民共和國的一切領土，包括中國大陸及其沿海島嶼，和同大陸及其沿海島嶼隔有公海的台灣及其周圍各島、澎湖列島、東沙群島、西沙群島、中沙群島、南沙群島以及其他屬於中國的島嶼。

(二)中國大陸及其沿海島嶼的領海以連接大陸岸上和沿海岸外緣島嶼上各基點之間的各直線為基線，從基線向外延伸十二海里(浬)的水域是中國的領海。在基線以內的水域，包括渤海灣、瓊州海峽在內，都是中國的內海。在基線以內的島嶼，包括東引島、高登島、馬祖列島、白犬列島、烏島、大小金門島、大擔島、二擔島、東碇島在內，都是中國的內海島嶼。

(三)一切外國飛機和軍用船舶，未經中華人民共和國政府的許可，不得進入中國的領海和領海上空。

任何外國船舶在中國領海航行，必須遵守中華人民共和國政府的有關法令。

(四)以上(二)(三)兩項規定的原則同樣適用於台灣及其周圍各島、澎湖列島、東沙群島、西沙群島、中沙群島、南沙群島以及其他屬於中國的島嶼。

台灣和澎湖地區現在仍然被美國武力侵佔，這是侵犯中華人民共和國領土完整和主權的非法行為。台灣和澎湖等地尚待收復，中華人民共和國政府有權採取一切適當的方法，在適當的時候，收復這些地區，這是中國的內政，不容外國干涉。



THỦ TƯỚNG PHỦ
NƯỚC VIỆT-NAM DÂN CHỦ CỘNG-HÒA

Thưa Đồng chí Tổng lý,

Chúng tôi xin trân trọng báo tin để Đồng chí Tổng lý rõ :

Chính phủ nước Việt-nam Dân chủ Cộng hoà ghi nhận và tán thành bản tuyên bố, ngày 4 tháng 9 năm 1958, của Chính phủ nước Cộng hoà Nhân dân Trung-hoa, quyết định về hải phận của Trung-quốc.

Chính phủ nước Việt-nam Dân chủ Cộng hoà tôn trọng quyết định ấy và sẽ chỉ thị cho các cơ quan Nhà nước có trách nhiệm triệt để tôn trọng hải phận 12 hải lý của Trung-quốc, trong mọi quan hệ với nước Cộng hoà Nhân dân Trung hoa trên mặt bể.

Chúng tôi xin kính gửi Đồng chí Tổng lý lời chào rất trân trọng./.

Hà-nội, ngày 14 tháng 9 năm 1958



PHẠM VAN ĐỒNG

Thủ tướng Chính phủ

Nước Việt - nam Dân chủ Cộng hoà

Kính gửi :

Đồng chí CHU AN LAI

Tổng lý Quốc vụ viện

Nước Cộng hoà Nhân dân Trung-hoa

tại

BAC-KINH.

ANNEXE 4

La note adressée le 14 septembre 1958 par le premier ministre vietnamien Pham Van Dong au premier ministre Zhou Enlai.



19:13

li Thái Lan cho tới khi tình hình nước này ổn định • Bộ Tài chính vừa

Sovereignty in the SCS

- Vietnam's perspectives:
 - Comments on China's claims:
 - **Loose** historical descriptions
 - China's claimed activities in the SCS were **not under the name/authority of Chinese state**.
 - China's maps

为全面地提早完成和超额完成五年计划而奋斗



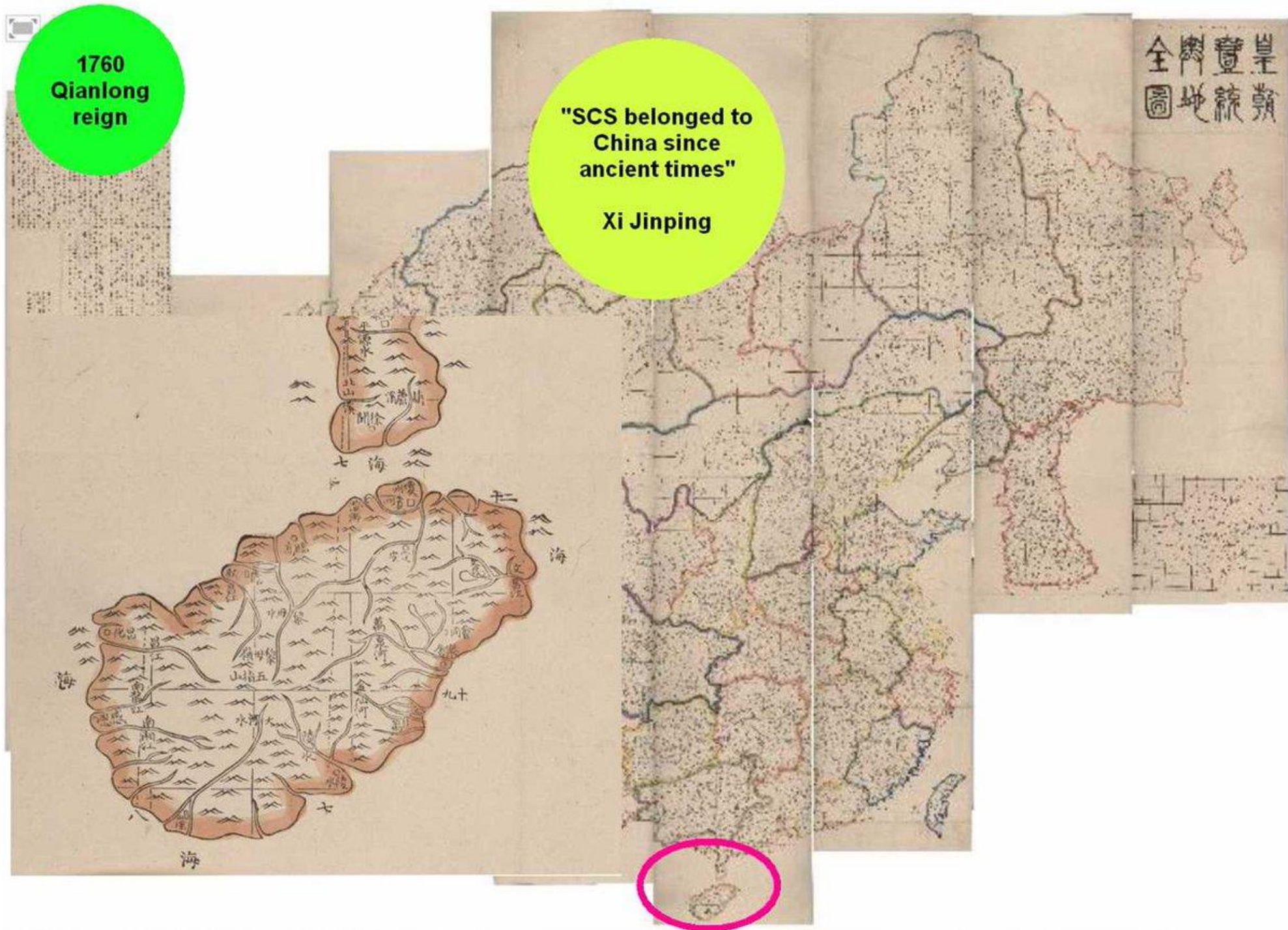


1760
Qianlong
reign

"SCS belonged to
China since
ancient times"

Xi Jinping

皇朝
輿地
全圖



Sovereignty in the SCS

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 - China's maps
 - China's occupation of some of the islands in the SCS is not in a peaceful way.
 - 1974: China took over some islands in the Paracel islands from the Republic of Vietnam (South of Vietnam) by force
 - [1988 clash](#) with People Republic of Vietnam over the Johnson North Reef and Johnson South Reef (Spratly islands) in the SCS.

China's view of itself

- China's perspectives:
 - China is a **victim**, not a trouble marker
 - **Other claimants** robbed China's territories and stealing resources.
 - **China** is doing to recover their lost territories and prevent others from stealing its resources.



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China's view of itself

- China's perspectives:
 - China is a **victim**, not a trouble marker
 - China has been already very **self-restrained**
 - Assertiveness is not an inherent characteristic of Chinese diplomacy
 - To stop others from becoming more demanding ⇒ damage to China's national interests and stimulate nationalism
 - To keep the SCS under control

China's view of itself

- Vietnam's perspectives:
 - The nature of China's assertiveness in the SCS dispute: China's expansionism

*“The ambition of the Peiking authorities over the two Vietnamese archipelagoes of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa manifests all the more clearly their policy of **big-nation expansionism and hegemony** which is aimed at **conquering** Vietnam as well as Laos and Kampuchea, gradually controlling and eventually turning the East Sea into a Chinese lake, and using the Indochinese peninsula as a springboard for their expansion into Southeast Asia” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1979)*

Approaches to the disputes

- China's 5 commitments:
 - Strong commitment to **peace and stability** in the SCS.
 - Why?
 - Chinese are peace loving people
 - China needs peace and stability to further develops its economy

Approaches to the disputes

- China's 5 commitments:
 - Strong commitment to **peace and stability** in the SCS.
 - Strong commitment to solve the disputes **through friendly consultation and negotiation (bilateral negotiations)**.
 - Why?
 - The principal of sovereign equality
 - Evidence from the past
 - The SCS disputes should not be an exception

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 - Strong commitment to **the freedom of navigation** and over flights.
 - Strong commitment to **win-win cooperation**

Approaches to the disputes

- Vietnam's perspectives: China's 3-Nos policy
 - No clarification policy:
 - No multilateral negotiation policy (prefer bilateral negotiation):
 - No internationalize the disputes

Conclusion

- There is a great difference in perspectives between China and Vietnam (or more broadly between China and other claimants) that prevent the SCS disputes to be solved effectively.
- China's perspective of its absolute sovereignty over the Paracel and Spratly islands, and China's consistent argument that there is no territorial dispute in the SCS is the main factor that blocks the resolution to the disputes.

